



Office of the Governor

ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER
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179

[Home](#)
[About Arnold](#)
[Newsroom](#)
[Issues](#)
[About Maria](#)
[Appointments](#)
[Blog](#)

Press Release

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Gov. Schwarzenegger Signs Executive Order to Expand Statewide Firefighting Efforts, Calls on Californians to Take Common Sense Fire Prevention Measures



Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger today signed an executive order that calls for additional staffing and resources to protect local communities from wildland fires and allows the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CDF) to expand its statewide firefighting efforts.

The Governor signed Executive Order S-10-06 at a ceremony at the Hemet-Ryan Air Attack Base in Hemet, CA.

"We face extreme fire conditions in our state with summer heat, high winds, steep mountains and vast forest land throughout the state," said Gov. Schwarzenegger. "I have seen the devastating effect wildfires can have. In 2003, I visited areas hit by the terrible wildfires here in Southern California. I am calling on Californians to do their part to promote fire safety in our communities."

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The Order directs the CDF to obtain additional staffing to support a heightened level of fire prevention public awareness and education utilizing volunteers, FireSafe Councils, and the Office of the State Fire Marshal. CDF will accelerate fire safe 100 foot clearance inspections by utilizing every second fire engine for inspections when not engaged in fire fighting operations. The Order also calls for the Office of Emergency Services to assist the CDF as fire threat conditions warrant, deploying OES fire engine strike teams to ensure a substantial response capability to any wildland fire situation in California. CDF and OES will work closely with federal, state and local government agencies, bordering states and Mexico, to maximize California's fire prevention and fighting capabilities and to provide appropriate reciprocal assistance when requested.

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"We are never as strong as when we work together. And with firefighters, government and the people

on the same page for fire prevention and control, we will be ready for a safe California summer," said Gov. Schwarzenegger.

Gov. Schwarzenegger today also called on Californians to take common sense precautions during fire season including:

- o Removing dead brush, branches, or other fire hazards from within 100 feet of homes.
- o Cleaning pine needles and leaves off of the roof.
- o Making sure residents have a good evacuation plan.

The Governor has been an active leader in the field of fire prevention and protection. The Governor's recent May Revise budget proposal includes \$400 million to strengthen the state's ability to respond to the significant health care demands created by major emergencies, including fires.

While in office, the Governor has increased total fire protection appropriation by almost \$150 million, including replacing old CDF fire engines and helicopters, mandating year-round staffing in Southern California, upgrading radio communications equipment and adding 60 new fire engines for local governments and CDF.

Last year, the Governor signed an executive order implementing recommendations by the Blue Ribbon Fire Commission established in 2003 by devoting:

§ \$10.8 million to replace 42 aging CDF fire engines beginning in 2005-06 and to fund a study on aging helicopters for implementation in 2008-09

§ \$9 million to provide fire season level staffing on a year round

basis for fire prone counties in Southern California (San Diego, Riverside and Bernardino)

§ \$2.9 million in funding to replace radio equipment with narrowband capable equipment, which will enhance communication capability between CDF and federal and local officials.

Full text of Executive Order S-10-06:

EXECUTIVE ORDER S-10-06

WHEREAS the threat of wildfires in California present extreme peril to the people, property and environment, and

WHEREAS this emergency situation of imminent fire danger is caused by the extraordinary number of dead, dying and diseased trees resulting from prolonged drought, overstocked forests and infestation by bark beetles and other decay organisms; and

WHEREAS an above normal level of precipitation throughout the state during this past winter has led to increased growth of grass and brush, and

WHEREAS the amount of dead and dying trees continues to increase, providing a readily available fuel load which could result in catastrophic fires; and

WHEREAS coordinated fire prevention, aggressive fuels reduction programs and strong initial attack resources remain critical; and

WHEREAS the increased risk of catastrophic wildfires throughout California threatens the lives, property and economic well-being of the people of the state; and

WHEREAS the increased risk of catastrophic wildfires throughout California may result in unplanned releases of air pollutants that adversely affect air and water quality, soil stability, populations of sensitive and endangered fish and wildlife species, and their habitat; and

WHEREAS the increased risk of catastrophic wildfires could significantly impact state efforts to reduce greenhouse gases by large uncontrolled emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases caused by wildfire; and

WHEREAS the United States Forest Service and Federal Emergency Management Agency have directed funding to assist in fuel

removal and forest health improvement; and

WHEREAS augmentation of fire suppression resources during the previous five years in response to the extraordinary fire conditions has resulted in an overall reduction in the average acres burned (excluding the destructive Southern California Fire Siege in October 2003, which was exacerbated by Santa Ana wind conditions).

NOW, THEREFORE, I, ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER, Governor of the State of California, by virtue of the power and authority vested in me by the Constitution and statutes of the State of California, do hereby issue this order to become effectively immediately:

1. The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CDF) shall secure and deploy additional resources necessary, as determined by the Director, to protect the safety of persons and property from wildfires during the 2006 periods of elevated fire risk as follows:

- * Assign a minimum crew of four firefighters to selected CDF engines as warranted based on fire threat conditions.
- * Assign additional resources in the CDF Contract Counties as warranted based on fire threat conditions.
- * Staff two additional CDF Conservation Camp Fire Crews as warranted based on fire threat conditions.
- * Coordinate with the military for those resources that may be available for assistance during emergencies in California.
- * Assign additional fire safe inspectors where and when beneficial to reduce fire risk.
- * Assign fire lookouts during peak fire conditions as part of CDF staffing patterns.
- * Increase dispatch and command functions at CDF Northern and Southern Operations centers and the CDF Sacramento Command Center when necessary to respond to significant fire events.

2. CDF shall accelerate fire safe clearance inspections by utilizing every second fire engine for inspections when not engaged in fire fighting operations.

3. CDF shall obtain additional staffing as necessary to support a heightened level of fire prevention public awareness and education utilizing CDF Volunteers in Prevention, FireSafe Councils, and the Office of the State Fire Marshal.

4. CDF shall continue to expedite the processing of contracts and grants of federal funds to the communities as quickly as possible and support all local and regional responses to the bark beetle affected tree eradication and community emergency planning efforts.

5. The Office of Emergency Services (OES), in consultation and coordination with CDF, as fire threat conditions warrant, shall deploy OES fire engine strike teams to ensure a substantial response capability to any wildland fire situation in California, and that the costs of the deployment shall be reimbursed consistent with the California Fire Service and Rescue Emergency Mutual Aid Plan and the California Fire Assistance Agreement.
6. The California National Guard shall prepare its fixed-wing aircraft and helicopters, and pre-position ground support equipment as appropriate for immediate response to major wildfires and report to OES weekly on the status of all aircraft.
7. The California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, including the Division of Juvenile Justice, shall place the highest priority for assignment of level one inmates and wards to staff Conservation Camp Fire Crews.
8. The California Conservation Corps shall report to CDF daily on the status of all its support crews for response to wildfires.
9. OES shall review appropriate state departments to assure preparedness for response to wildfires.
10. CDF and OES shall work closely with federal, state and local government agencies, bordering states, and the government of Mexico to maximize California's fire prevention and fighting capabilities and to provide appropriate reciprocal assistance when requested.

This Order is not intended to, and does not create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable in law or equity, against the State of California, its departments, agencies or other entities, its officers or employees, or any other person.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that as soon as hereafter possible, this order be filed in the Office of the Secretary of State and that widespread publicity and notice be given to this order.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of California to be affixed this 22nd day of June 2006.

Arnold Schwarzenegger

Governor of California

ATTEST:

BRUCE McPHERSON

Secretary of State

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